

FORM B – BUILDING

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
MASSACHUSETTS ARCHIVES BUILDING
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Photograph



Locus Map (north at top)



Recorded by: Larson Fisher Assocs with Kathryn Grover

Organization: Eastham Historical Commission

Date: April 2013

Assessor's Number USGS Quad Area(s) Form Number

11-79C

ORLEANS

EAS.612

Town/City: Eastham

Place: (*neighborhood or village*): Eastham Center

Address: 305 Mill Road

Historic Name: Joshua and Ruth Doane house

Uses: Present: single-family residence

Original: single-family residence

Date of Construction: pre-1838

Source: deeds, tax records, property owner

Style/Form: Cape Cod

Architect/Builder: unknown

Exterior Material:

Foundation: stone & brick

Wall/Trim: wood shingles/wood trim

Roof: asphalt shingles

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures: shed

Major Alterations (*with dates*): post-2004 addition to north side of west side ell.

Condition: good

Moved: no ☒ yes ☐ **Date:**

Acreage: 0.73 acre

Setting: The subject property is located on the west side of Mill Road and an irregular strip of land provides access to and water frontage on Long Pond. The surrounding land uses are single family residential.

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EASTHAM

305 MILL ROAD

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☐ Recommended for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

The classic gable roof form and overall proportions of this Cape Cod dwelling, suggest that its reputed construction date of 1764 is possible.¹ However, independent confirmation through a professional inspection of interior finishes and construction methods would be required to substantiate this claim. A large brick center chimney, three-bay front facade with central entrance (since converted to a window), and a two-room-deep plan are also characteristic of early Cape Cod dwellings. The entire building is clad with weathered wood shingles; the roofing is now asphalt shingles. A recessed right-side ell could well have been an early service wing which now connects to a further extension to the right (west); this wing also has a rear ell (dates unknown). An addition to the front (north side) of this wing has been constructed since the Assessor photo documented the building in 2004, along with two-over-two double hung windows replacements. Aluminum combination storm windows have been installed.

A split-rail wood fence extends along the front property line and a portion of the current north side boundary. Mature coniferous and deciduous trees and shrubs surround the house. A shed, that was once located north of the house has either been demolished and replaced or moved to a location

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

According to former owner Glenna Borgarello, an English penny dated 1763 was found under the front door sill of the house at 305 Mill Road when central heating was installed in 1950, and the construction date of 1764 given by the town appears to be based on this discovery. The earliest traceable deed for the property dates to 1838, when the widow Priscilla Mayo Doane sold the property to Billingsgate lighthouse keeper Abijah Gill, whom she married in 1846. The house at 305 Mill Road may have been built by her father-in-law Joshua Doane (1745-post 1810), who married Ruth Rich of Truro in 1768 and then "settled in Eastham near his father and on a portion of his father's farm." However, the same source notes that "the house built there by Joshua Doane is still standing, and for many years was owned and occupied by Capt. Russell Doane," who left Eastham for Brooklyn, New York, in 1851. There is no record of Russell Doane in the deed history of this property. The fact that the earliest traceable deed was from Priscilla Doane and her son-in-law suggests that 305 Mill Road had belonged to her first husband Solomon Doane, who was born in 1778, fifteen years after this house is said to have been built, and died in 1816. Therefore exactly who built the house and when is not definitively documented.

Priscilla Mayo Doane (1781-1858) was the daughter of John and Priscilla Mayo of Eastham and had married Solomon Doane about 1800. Her father-in-law Joshua Doane and his family had sold their Eastham property in 1799 and moved to Royalston, Massachusetts, and it seems likely that the 305 Mill Road property was then occupied by Priscilla and Solomon Doane.² Censuses and deeds suggest that Priscilla Doane continued to occupy the house through at least 1848. In 1834 she and her son-in-law, Benjamin Atwood, sold a tract of swamp and a house to Abijah Gill (1782-1853).³ Born in Wellfleet, Gill was a mariner from a young age and keeper of Billingsgate Lighthouse from 1830 to about 1847. In 1846 he was sixty-two years old and widowed when he married the widow Priscilla Mayo Doane. In 1848 the Gills sold 305 Mill Road to Thomas P. Nickerson of Eastham; the deed mentioned a dwelling house and outbuildings. It notes further that "the above property was originally Priscilla Doanes" and that Gill's interest in the property was acquired by having married her.⁴

Born about 1824, Thomas P. Nickerson was the son of Hatsel (1796-1881) and Sally Paine Nickerson, who had lived in this area for decades; so had the families of his brother Samuel (1798-1875) and of Samuel's sons Nathan B. (1826-90) and Myrick D. Nickerson (1826-1907), who had married the sisters Phebe and Roxanna Horton respectively. Thomas P. Nickerson does not appear in the 1850 census in Eastham, though his father's and uncle Samuel's households are enumerated consecutively then and in later decades. Not even two years after having acquired the 305 Mill Road property, Thomas P. Nickerson sold it to Myrick D. Nickerson for \$200; the property was then five acres with a house and outbuildings.⁵ From that time forward 305 Mill Road became known as the Myrick D. Nickerson homestead.

The 1850 census shows Myrick Nickerson as being at sea and still resident in his father's household, though he had married Roxanna Horton in Boston in 1847. She is also shown in the Samuel Nickerson household with her sister Phebe and her sister's husband, Myrick's brother Nathan. The 1860 census shows Myrick Nickerson in his own household (though he bought the Mill Road property a week after the census was enumerated in this district) with \$500 in real property; his wife and their sons

¹ Record of 2004 or 2005 interview of owner Glenna Borgarello (G. B.) by Eastham Historical Commission member Elizabeth Sandler: "During construction for central heating, stones were found on foundation corners under the carrying points with bricks in-between. Horsehair plaster walls. Borning room was located behind the living room fireplace. B. R. was made into a closet and linen closet. There were stairs with high risers and narrow treads in the closet. G. B. put new stairs in the closet. G.B. also put in new chimney and fireplace. The kitchen was built like the interior of a boat with high ceiling curved in the middle. Hearths in the living room and current den were high in the middle and curved downward like gunwales. G.B. suspects that a boat builder may have done the construction...Original 18" wide boards in front of the fireplace with worn spots...Den in back to left of house had 3 supporting beams—one in the middle and one on either side built up horizontally. Two round Cape Cod cellars—one in the den, filled in when G.B. found it and the other in the living room. Both cellars included ladders and access was obtained via handles in the 18" wide floorboards."

² Alfred Alder Doane, comp., *The Doane Family . . . And Their Descendants* (Boston: by the author, 1902), 66, 97, 161, 286.

³ Benjamin Atwood and Priscilla Doane to Abijah Gill, 11 August 1834, BCD 23:105.

⁴ Abijah and Priscilla Gill to Thomas P. Nickerson, 21 November 1848, BCD 44:254.

⁵ Thomas P. Nickerson to Myrick D. Nickerson, 16 June 1860, BCD 76:20.

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Thomas and Allen are listed with him. The 1880 census shows Myrick as a fisherman in a household with his wife Roxanna, son Fred, eldest son Thomas C. Nickerson, also a fisherman, and Thomas's wife Mary and son Walter. By 1900 Myrick had moved to his son Thomas's household; he is shown in that year's census as a cook, while Thomas worked as a guide. Myrick D. Nickerson died in Eastham in 1907.

In March Myrick Nickerson sold his homestead, then four acres, to Sarah M. Chipman Mayo, wife of Israel Mayo, who owned it for a little more than six years.⁶ In 1899 she sold the Mill Road property to Whitman F. Howes.⁷ Born in Chatham in 1858, Whitman F. Howes was the son of mariner Whitman Howes and his wife Ruth. In 1879, when he married Anna Burchell in Chatham, he was working as a fisherman. In 1885, after the death of his first wife, Howes married Carrie L. Penniman, daughter of Joseph and Caroline Penniman of Eastham, and it was probably this marriage that brought him to the town. The 1900 census shows him as a surfman at the Coast Guard's life-saving station, and he was living in a house he owned with his wife Carrie, daughter Susie, and son Ommund H Howes. The 1902 tax records for Eastham record Whitman F. Howes with a dwelling house valued at \$400, a barn and outbuildings valued together at \$300, and 2.25 acres of land. Howes remained a surfman until at least 1910, but by 1920 he had moved to State Highway and was working as a poultry farm laborer.

In 1908 Howes sold 305 Mill Road to William Hopkins Forrest.⁸ Forrest was the son of Virginia native William H. Forrest Sr. and his wife Ida B. Grozier Forrest, who died in 1892 when William Jr. was sixteen years old. In 1900 he was living in the Provincetown household of his uncle Luther P. Hatch along with his father and two siblings. William Forrest Jr. was then working as a house painter. In 1901 in Eastham he married Carrie L. Knowles, daughter of John A. and Lucy Cobb Knowles, and he probably moved to Eastham at that point. By 1910 he, like Whitman Howes, was working as a life-saving station surfman. He and his wife had adopted a son, Herbert, born about 1907, and Forrest's father was living in their Eastham household.

Forrest lived most of his life on State Highway, where he ran a variety store for decades; he may well have rented the 305 Mill Road house for additional income from summer people. Tax records for 1926 show him with a dwelling valued at \$1725, a barn, poultry house, and garage, a cottage, a "roadside store," several outbuildings, a water system and a lighting plant; his homestead lot was seven acres, suggesting it was the State Highway property, and he owned 54.5 acres in other parcels. The 1930 census shows him as a store proprietor living on State Highway with his wife, son Herbert, then a truck driver, Herbert's wife, and a domestic servant. By 1931 Forrest had built a "ladies rest room," a pump house, an "oil house," and a "camp house" to his property holdings, probably all on his State Highway property.

In 1936 Forrest sold the 4-acre 305 Mill Road property to Joel Skarin, who was born in Slap, Sweden, in 1887 and had come to the United States in 1914.⁹ He was working as a painter and living in New York by 1931, and by 1935 he was living in Exeter, New Hampshire. Tax records for 1937 show Skarin with a house valued at \$1150, a barn and shed valued at \$230, an outbuilding, a poultry house, and 3.1 acres of land. The 1940 census shows him on Mill Road with real property worth \$2000; he was working as a farmer in a "home garden." His draft registration for 1942 states he was "not employed—attends to his own property." Tax records for 1947 show him with only a .3-acre lot, a house valued at \$1500, a barn at \$230, an outbuilding at \$150, and a poultry house at \$30.

Joel Skarin died by November 1950, and at that time Charles H. and Glenna Borgarello of New Milford, New Jersey, acquired the property from his estate.¹⁰ At that time the house had no electricity or plumbing. The Borgarello's installed a water system and central heating, and it appears to have been they who built the two cottages west of the house that are shown on later subdivision plans. Tax records for 1954 show the Borgarellos as owners of the 305 Mill Road house, its barn, an outbuilding, and three cottages together valued at \$7500.

Charles Howard Joseph Borgarello was born in 1916 and was working as an insurance clerk in 1940. His father, Guy Borgarello, was an oil refinery engineer; his mother, Elsie, emigrated from the British West Indies in 1899. The 1941 record of his enlistment in the National Guard states that he had studied engineering at Lehigh University for three years. In 1977 the Borgarellos divided the property into two parcels, and in 1981 they deeded the parcel including 305 Mill Road to Glenna Borgarello alone. The property included at that time the house, a "store-shop," two rental cottages, and a shed.¹¹ In 1984 Glenna Borgarello further divided the 305 Mill Road property so that the two cottages were on a separate parcel; they became 295 Mill Road. The next month she sold the parcel containing the house, shed, and shop building to Elizabeth R. Lehr and Martin H. Nuth of West Trenton, New Jersey, and Phyllis E. and William C. Lehr of Mountain Lakes, New Jersey. These couples divided the property still further, placing the house and the shop on different parcels. The current owners, Alan and Alice Cole Oliff of Lexington, acquired the 305 Mill Road parcel in 2011.¹²

⁶ Myrick D. Nickerson to Sarah M. Chipman Mayo, 27 March 1893, BCD 239:401.

⁷ Sarah M. Mayo to Whitman F. Howes, 22 September 1899, BCD 239:467.

⁸ Whitman F. Howes to William Hopkins Forrest, 6 October 1908, BCD 292:126.

⁹ William H. Forrest to Joel Skarin, 29 August 1936, BCD 520:39.

¹⁰ Oscar Johnson, North Eastham, to Charles H. and Glenna Borgarello, New Milford NJ, 2 November 1950, BCD 768:87.

¹¹ Charles H. and Glenna Borgarello to Glenna Borgarello, 25 August 1981, BCD 3392:348; also "Plan of Division of Land in Eastham, Mass. As Surveyed for Charles H. Borgarello et ux (Glenna)," 10 November 1977, BCP 319:94.

¹² Glenna Borgarello, Mill Road, to Elizabeth R. Lehr and Martin H. Nuth, West Trenton, NJ, and Phyllis E. and William C. Lehr, Mountain Lakes NJ, 6 February 1984, BCD 4008:25; Elizabeth R. Lehr and Martin H. Nuth, Mill Road, and Phyllis E. and William C. Lehr, Oak Ridge, NJ, to Elizabeth R. Lehr and Martin H. Nuth, 28 April 1986, BCD 5048:132; Martin H. Nuth and Elizabeth R. Lehr, 305 Mill Road, to David and Nancy Algire, Salem NY, 15 June 2004, BCD 18732:307; David and Nancy Algire, Salem NY, to Alan and Alice Cole Oliff, Lexington, 3 December 2011, BCD 25910:65. See also "Plan of Land in Eastham, Mass. Prepared for Elizabeth B. Lehr and Martin H. Nuth and Phyllis E. Lehr & William C. Lehr, Being a Division of Lot 3 as Shown in Plan Book 380, Page 4,"

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MAPS

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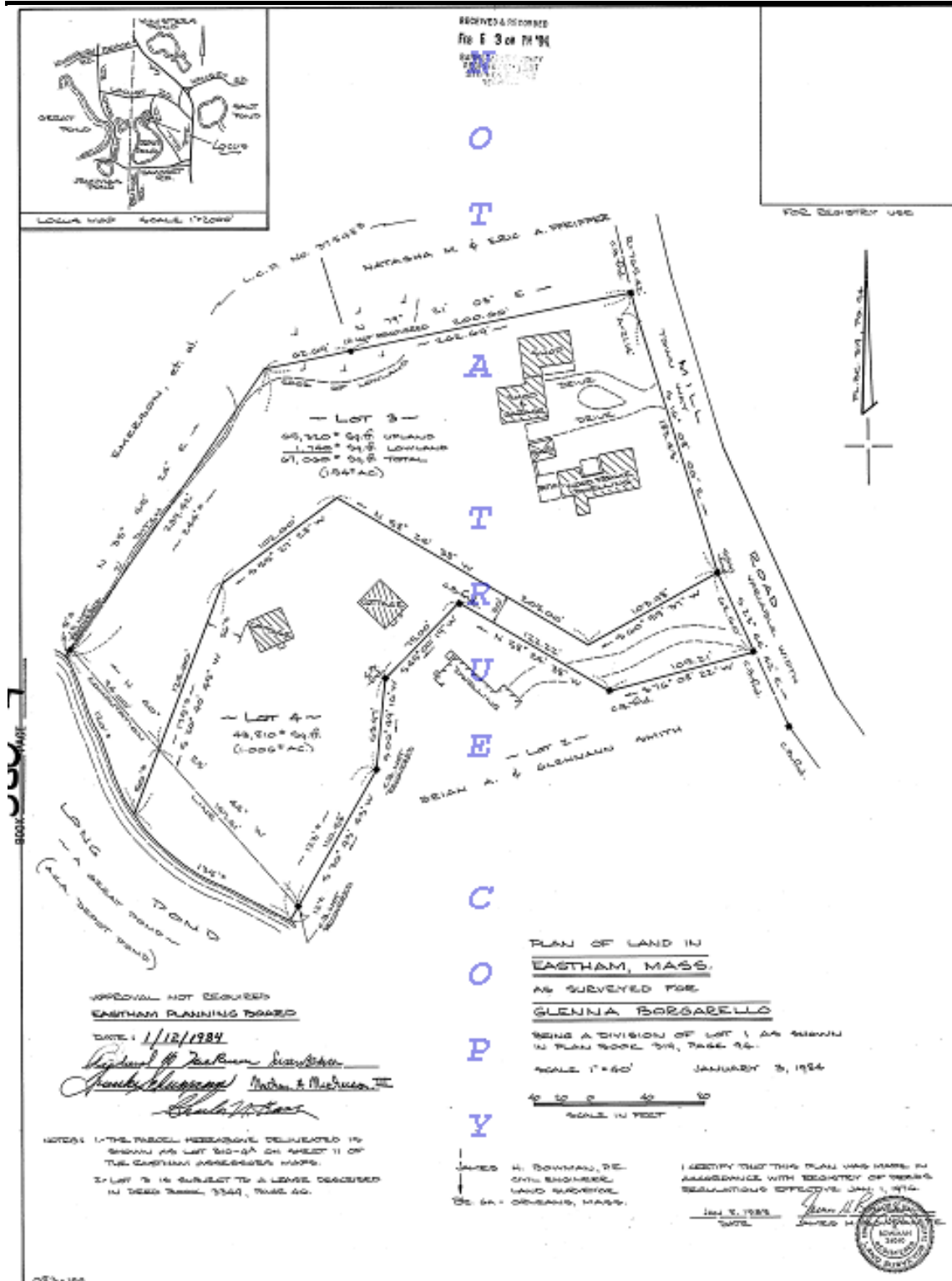
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Borgarello subdivision of 1984 (BCP 380:4): 305 Mill Road is shown as Lot 3.

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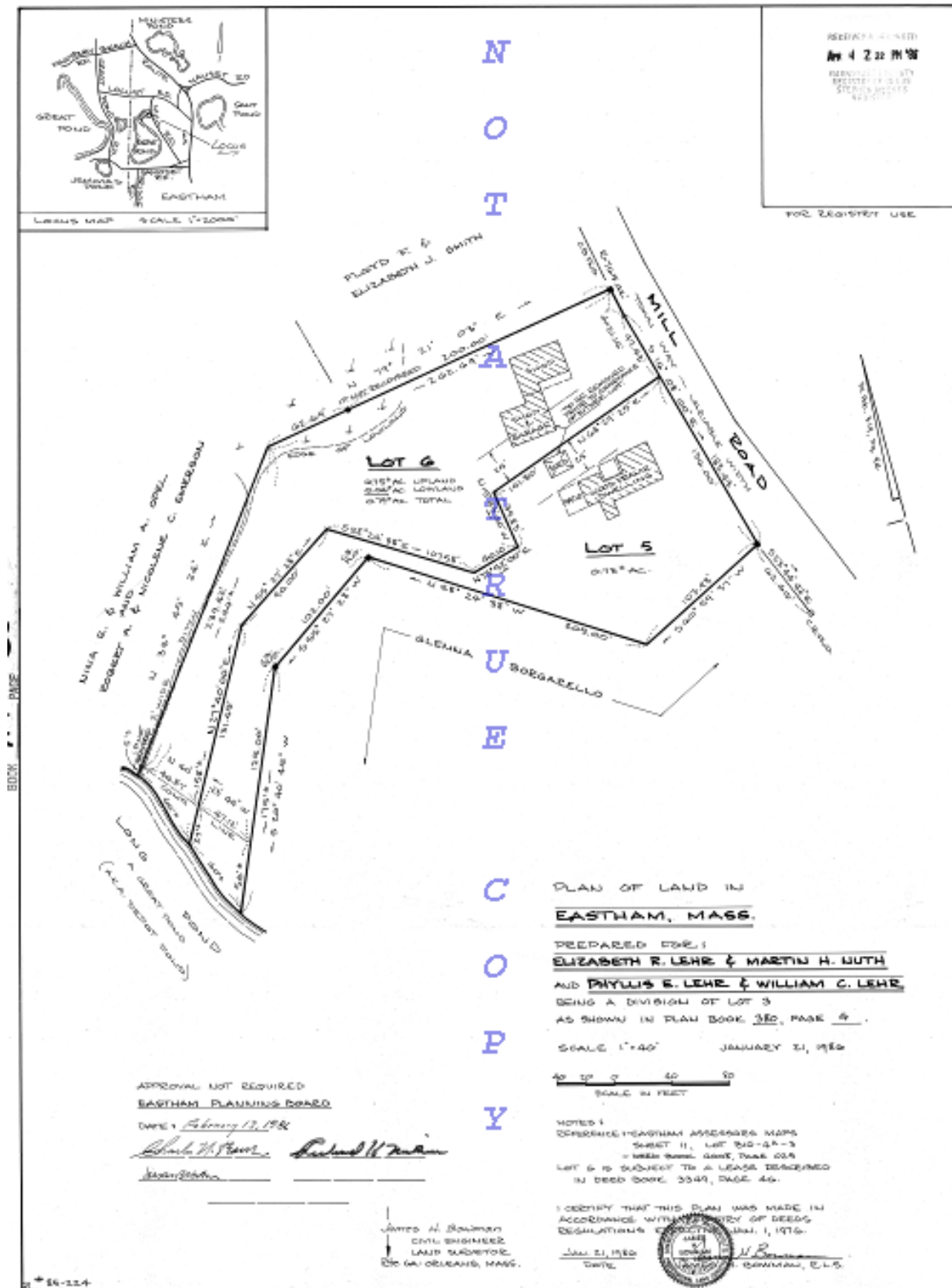
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Lehr/Nuth subdivision of 1986 (BCP 414:35): 305 Mill Road is shown as Lot 5.

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PHOTOGRAPHS

(credit Larson Fisher Associates, 2012-2013 unless otherwise noted)



View from northeast (Assessor's photo taken on March 23, 2004.)



Aerial view from east (photo courtesy Bing Maps.)



Recent view from northeast.



View from north.